(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) to (c) The Government has liberalized its Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) policy in the mining sector which allows foreign equity holding upto 100%, on the automatic route for all non fuel and non atomic minerals except diamonds and precious stones. This covers exploration, mining, mineral processing and metallurgy. In the case of diamonds and precious stones, foreign equity upto 74% is allowed on the automatic route for both exploration and mining operations. However, proposals seeking foreign equity higher than 74% for diamonds & precious stones are considered by the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB). The Mines & Minerals [Development & Regulation] Act, 1957 has also been suitably amended to make it more investor friendly.

(d) and (e) Mineral concessions are granted only to Indian nationals or a company registered in India under the companies Act, 1956. All such persons or companies including those involving FDI have to comply with laws of the country including those existing for the protection of interest of workers/employees of Mines such as Mines Act, 1952 and other laws.

NMDC Headquarters

†2727. SHRIMATI KAMLA MANHAR:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to shift the Headquartrers of N.M.D.C. from Hyderabad to a certain district of Chhattisgarh keeping in view the abundance of minerals in Chhattisgarh region and better prospects thereof in future;

(b) if so, by when a decision is likely to be taken in this regard; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) No, Sir.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) is operating its major mining activities in the States of Chhattisgarh, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh. Besides this, National Mineral Development Corporation has also been granted two reconnaissance permits for exploration of Diamonds — one in Panna District of Madhya Pradesh and another in Ananthpur District of Andhra Pradesh. NMDC is also pursuing with Government of Orissa for grant of mining lease for iron ore. The Head Office and Registered Office of NMDC are centrally located at Hyderabad. Therefore, the Government is not considering to shift the Headquarters of NMDC from Hyderabad.

Post Tsunami study by geological survey of India along the coastal areas

2728. SHRI N.R. GOVINDRAJAR: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Geological Survey of India has conducted any study regarding the safety of life and property of people living along coastal areas as a result of recent Tsunami waves;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the amount made available to Geological Survey of India for this purpose; and

(c) whether the Geological Survey of India proposes to consult the specialists/experts in this field?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) and (b) Geological Survey of India (GSI) is not directly involved in the safety aspects of the people living in the coastal areas. However, GSI is one of the members in the Department of Scienceand Technology (DST) Committee on resettlement issues as a sequel to the Tsunami in Andaman and Nicobar region.

GSI has taken immediate action for carrying out multifarious geoscientific studies on the aftermath of the devastating earthquake and Tsunami of 26th December 2004 as detailed below —

(i) A team of scientists led by the Director General, GSI visited South Andaman and Baratang Islands to study the effects of earthquake